



My View

A LOST MISSION

Recently I read a newspaper article in which a physician was promoting what he called "patient centered care." He described "patient centered care" as health care which focuses on the needs of patients rather than on the needs of providers, insurance companies, medical device makers and others. What was remarkable about this article is that the "patient centered approach" was described as "new", "innovative" and "revolutionary."

WOW, I thought that health care has always been about meeting the needs of patients. I've always assumed that the core mission of healthcare is about patient care. As I read this article it became clear to me that if being patient focused is now considered something new that the healthcare system has surely lost its way....that the healthcare system has forgotten its core mission somewhere along the way.

Why bring this article to the attention of you...TIP leaders? Because this example of the healthcare system losing its patient focus happens to many organizations; and it could happen to us, with disastrous results.

At this point in our development we are a very client centered organization. We have not forgotten that the only reason for our existence is to help survivors of tragedy. However, as organizations mature over time there is a tendency for them to turn inward and to focus on their own needs. We all know self centered organizations which spend most of their time focused on raising funds, developing new policies and procedures and on public relations. I don't want us to go down that path.

So I will take every opportunity to remind you of the fragility of our mission and how easy it could be for us to lose our way.

There are 6 easy questions we can use to assess whether we are maintaining our mission focus...

- > Do we make all of our decisions based on what's good for our clients?
- > Do we have a system of capturing "what works" with clients so that we can better serve them?
- > Do we hold volunteers and ourselves to high standards so that our clients receive the best we have to offer?
- > Do we share and celebrate the feedback we receive from clients?
- > Do we "call share" at every opportunity?
- > Do we include our clients at our events and invite them to participate?

I ask myself these questions regularly as a way of ensuring I'm still on track and that the national organization is client focused. I encourage you to do the same.

Please share your thoughts with me at Tipincceo@aol.com

- > Do you agree that it's easy for organizations to get "off track"?
- > Do you agree that TIP is still on track?
- > Are there things we can do that we currently aren't doing to ensure we stay client focused?

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